

T Your Health

The Patient Health Education Newsletter of the Dayton VA Medical Center

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Flu Season Tips

By
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Flu season is just around the corner, and the single most important thing you can do to protect yourself is to get a flu shot. Influenza, commonly called the flu, is a virus, which infects the respiratory tract. An infected person can spread it when they talk, cough, sneeze, or by hand-to-hand contact.

People who are at high risk for developing complications from the flu should be vaccinated. This includes people aged 65 or over. People with chronic diseases of the heart, lung, kidneys, diabetes, or immune system problems. Residents of nursing homes or other shared living medical facilities should also be vaccinated.

Other ways to protect yourself include eating healthy, exercising, not smoking, avoiding people with the flu, and washing your hands often.

It takes about 1 to 2 weeks after vaccination for antibodies to form against the flu and to provide protection.

The vaccine didn't help; I still got the flu!
The vaccine strains are chosen about 10 months before flu season in order to prepare the vaccine. The flu virus constantly changes and the vaccine may not offer as much protection as first planned. However, if you do get the flu, having the vaccine is still helpful in reducing the seriousness of the illness and the risk of complications.

Vaccine risks: Most people have no or only minor side effects from the flu vaccine. Pain, redness, soreness, swelling, or a hard lump may develop at the injection site. You may develop aches or pains in joints or muscles or a temperature of 101 degrees or less, for a day or two.

As is the case with any drug or vaccine, there is a remote possibility that allergic reactions or other serious reactions, or even death may occur after receiving the flu vaccine. Seek immediate medical attention if you have difficulty in breathing or swallowing, hoarseness or wheezing, develop hives, itching, reddening of skin, swelling of the eyes, face or inside of nose, or sudden or severe unusual tiredness or weakness.

Another safe and effective vaccine is the Pneumovax, which protects against the most common form of pneumonia. This vaccine is recommended for all people aged 65 or older, people of any age with chronic diseases of the heart, lung, or kidneys, or with diabetes, or people with immune system problems.

A single dose injection is given. One dose is sufficient for most people. However, revaccination is recommended at six-year intervals for certain chronic conditions.

The flu vaccine is available at the Dayton VA Medical Center, as well as Lima, Springfield, Middletown, and Richmond Community Based Outpatient Clinics. Call your Primary Care Team with any further questions.





We have all heard the haunting melody, "Taps." It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and creates tears in our eyes. But do you know the story behind the song? Reportedly, it all

began in 1863 during the Civil War when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of a narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate Soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern, and suddenly caught his breath, and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son! The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy had enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. The Captain asked if he could have a group of army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate, but out of respect for his father, they did say he could have one musician play. The Captain chose a bugler and he asked him to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his son's uniform. This wish was granted. The haunting melody we now know as "Taps," used at military funerals, was born. Here are the words to the song, "Taps."

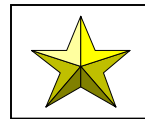
"Taps"

Author Diane O. Sides

Day is done, Gone the sun
From the Lakes, From the hills
From the sky. All is well,
Safely rest. God is nigh.

Fading light, Dims the sight
And a star, Gems the sky,
Gleaming bright, From afar,
Drawing nigh, Falls the night.

Thanks and Praise, For our days,
'Neath the sun. 'Neath the stars,
'Neath the sky, As we go,
This we know, God is nigh.



Employee Spotlight

Pamela J. Mishler, Ph.D., sets an example at the Dayton VA. Dr. Mishler is an Audiologist and a supervisor in the Rehabilitation Care Line. Pam decided to start running when, at a family gathering, the family members noticed they were gaining weight and decided to get fit as a family. Pam has run in two marathons and is getting ready for her third in October. She uses the Wellness Center for upper body fitness and speed work. Pam would like everyone to know that she is not the only marathoner on station. The group includes Fred Petersen, Art Aaronson, and Craig Attisano.

Dr. Mishler shows the Wellness Center to new students and potential employees as a perk for working here. Pam's motto is, "I'll never feel like I'm over 50."



"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

Mark Twain



Veteran Spotlight

LFC For You And Me *Poem by Lawrence J. Bender*

Lifetime Fitness that's for me!
Getting fit is the way to be.

Twelve weeks is the first step there,
You'll start to feel thin then you will care.

The staff will help with encouragement too.
With John, Mark, and Aris, they will
support what you do.

But first you must take the first step
and follow through.
That's something they can't do for you.

But once you do, you'll be happy I say,
Cause you'll be losing weight at the Dayton VA.

So come along young and old,
And let's workout and lose that load.

So don't delay in your choice today.
Join Lifetime Fitness and be a winner
at the Dayton VA.

Fit-Tip

By John Walter, M.Ed., R.K.T.

Today, more and more fitness enthusiasts are experiencing what is known as "over training." Here are some symptoms of over training:

1. decreased performance
2. general feeling of weakness and fatigue
3. increased muscle soreness
4. increased irritability, anxiety, or depression
5. frequent illness from lowered immune response

Few of us will experience this, but some of us tend to overdo it. Or a coach may push one of our children to overdo it. How does over training happen?

In one case, we actually "overwork." This is from training too much or too often. The body doesn't have time to recover from the exercise session, and there is an increased risk of injury. In this case, the individual may actually lose muscle, appetite, become

depressed, and possibly become physically injured.

In another case, the ability to exercise plateaus or decreases due to the same consistent unvarying routine. The system is not stimulated with new movements. No improvement in performance results from this type of exercise.

Solution: vary your routine (there are many different exercises for the same body part) and get adequate rest between sessions. Generally, the harder you do something (weight lifting with arms), the less often you need to do it (2-3 days per week) and the easier something is (walking), the more you can do it (3-5 days per week).

Employee Wellness Center Activities

Spinning

Monday & Wednesday at 4:45 PM instructed
by Jon VonderHaar

Tuesday & Thursday at 4:45 PM instructed by
Bernardo Sanchez

Personal Training

By appointment and instructed by
Harold DeLotelle, Jr., Extension 2968

Low-Impact Aerobics

Tuesday & Thursday at 4:45 instructed by
Melanie Morgan

To enroll or for more information call,
937-268-6511, extensions 5406 or 1438.

Healthful Eating

American Dietetic Association

Do you find that eating at a restaurant sabotages your diet? Below are some helpful tips to make eating out a pleasurable, guilt-free experience.

- Select a restaurant with plenty of variety on the menu.
- Choose broiled, baked, steamed or poached items.
- Share large portions with a friend or take part of it home with you.
- Ask for gravies, salad dressings, toppings, and sauces to be served on the side.

- Order fruit as a low-calorie appetizer to curb your appetite.
- Drink water, coffee, and tea or diet soft drinks instead of alcoholic beverages or milk shakes.
- Request sherbet, fruit ices, low-fat frozen yogurt or just an after-dinner mint if you want something sweet at the end of a meal.
- Choose whole-grain breads, bread sticks, Italian, or French bread instead of calorie-rich biscuits and croissants.
- Select a salad, chili, regular-size burger (hold the cheese) or pizza with veggie toppings at fast-food stops.
- Skip the fries, and dress up your burger with lettuce, tomato, onion, and a little mustard and catsup.
- Leave off the mayonnaise and special sauces.

Important Phone Numbers

Customer Service
Information & Registration
1-800-827-1000

Veteran/Employee Wellness Center
(937) 268-6511, Extension 1438

Patient Advocate
(937) 262-2164

Patient Health Education Office
(937) 262-3376

Dayton Primary Care
Blue Team (937) 267-5369
Red Team (937) 267-5371
Orange Team (937) 267-5323
Green Team (937) 267-5324

Lima Community Based Outpatient Clinic
(419) 227-9676

Middletown Community Based Outpatient Clinic
(513) 423-8387

Springfield Community Based Outpatient Clinic
(937) 328-3385

Richmond, Indiana Community Based
Outpatient Clinic
(765) 973-6915

VA Benefits
1-800-827-1000

VA Tele-Nurse
(advice and referral service)
1-800-838-6446

Visit us Online at www.dayton.med.va.gov

Current programs are available to all Veterans and their families. For more information on the programs or support groups, call the Patient Education Office at (937) 262-3376.

- AARP- 55 Alive, Mature Driving Course
- Advanced Care Planning
- Congestive Heart Failure Education
- Continuing Education Resource Center
- Diabetes Education
- End Stage Renal Disease Education
- Growing Through Grief
- Heartburn—Reflux Disease Education
- Hepatitis C—What You Need To Know
- Managing Chronic Pain
- Sexual Health Education
- Smoking Cessation Program
- Warfarin (Coumadin) Education Program
- Weight Management Program
- Heartburn (Reflux) Disease Education

Current Support Groups are designed to provide support and education to Veterans on an ongoing basis.

- Blinded Veterans Support Group
- Hepatitis C Support Group
- Oncology Discussion Group
- Parkinson's Disease Support Group
- Women Veterans of America, Chap. Six



For Your Health Newsletter is a quarterly publication for Veterans, Employees, and their families of the Dayton VA Medical Center. This newsletter is offered to provide reliable health information to those we serve. It is not intended to take the place of personal medical advice which should be obtained directly from your health care provider. If you have any questions or comments about "To Your Health," please call the Patient Health Education Office at 937-262-3376 or send an e-mail to: daytonprweb@med.va.gov